

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

No. 30.

DECEMBER, 1909.

PRICE ONE PENNY.
1s. 6d. per annum, post free

Contents.

	PAGE
Notes of the Month	1
Unitarianism or Liberal Religion.—By S. Shannon Millin, B.L.	2
Martin Luther and his Music Reform.—By Arthur Davis, F.R.C.O.	4
Notes on Downpatrick Meeting-house.—By Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A.	5
Ordination at Newry	6
The Truth about Christmas.—By Miss Ethel Davidson	8
Reports:—Ballee; Downpatrick; Holywood; Killinchy; Moira; Mountpottinger; Newry; Unity Guild	10

Notes of the Month.

HERE has recently been issued by the Committee appointed for the purpose a new translation of the Athanasian Creed. A comparison of it with the older form reveals a slight improvement in the phraseology whereby some of the most objectionable expressions are softened down. But in spite of that improvement the Creed still remains as a monument of religious intolerance in times when much is being done to proclaim a truly catholic form of faith. Moreover, a re-translation does not meet the difficulty of those who feel that so long as such a Creed is ordered to be read in the services of the Church the spiritual value of the whole form of service is vitiated. That is clearly perceived by the Archbishop of Canterbury, for in his letter inviting the co-operation of the several members

of the Committee he says:—"I have never concealed my own opinion that the mere re-translation into English of the *Quicunque Vult* provides no actual remedy, directly or indirectly, for the difficulties which surround the question of the use of the document in the services of the Church. Such remedy, if any, as is to be found for these difficulties must, in my judgment, be sought in another way." But we would go further and say that the only satisfactory way of improvement is the complete abandonment of the Athanasian Creed as a compulsory part of a Christian form of service.

It is generally agreed that the recent visit to the North of Ireland of deputations appointed by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association and the Sunday School Association was a means of mutual benefit. It afforded an opportunity to both the visitors and the visited of learning what was being done for the spread of the common faith, and also was responsible for good meetings and friendly intercourse. But perhaps not the least important of the purposes which it served was the emphasising of the fact that if the end pursued be the same in different districts or countries yet varying conditions prescribe different means for the attainment of that end. In every case that was not clearly perceived on the part of some of the visitors, but fortunately it was possible on such an occasion to correct hastily-drawn and mistaken conclusions. In

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

other respects the visit could not fail to be productive of much good. We were led to perceive that while we have our own special problems and our own special difficulties we can proceed to solve the first and overcome the second, assured of the hearty sympathy of our co-religionists in England, while at the same time letting them realise that we are able to think of and to feel with them as they resolutely cope with their own particular tasks. This ability to see the larger vision will not make us less clear-sighted but more for the work that demands our devotion and our self-sacrifice.

Many of our readers would doubtless note with much satisfaction the conferring of the degree of LL.D. by the Royal University upon Dr. John Campbell. Not only to them but also to others outside our own community it would appeal as a most fitting and well-deserved honour. In this case the recipient of the honour was a distinguished graduate of the University, and one who by his skill and reputation has well repaid the debt which he owed to it. Moreover, Dr. Campbell had always taken the keenest and most practical interest in the success of the University, and had done splendid work as a member of the Senate. Hence it may be said that in honouring him the Royal University was also conferring distinction upon itself, and, as we believe, doing honour to the religious community of which, both by descent as well as by personal attachment, Dr. John Campbell is such a worthy and respected member.

A remarkable tribute was paid the other week to Dr. Gawin Orr, J.P., Ballylesson, who recently resigned the post of medical officer to the local dispensary. The Lisburn Board of Guardians unanimously voted to Dr. Orr a superannuation allowance; the Committee's report stating that Dr. Orr "had completed a faithful service of over forty years, during which there had never been a complaint made against him, and he had never been absent on a

holiday." The Chairman, Mr. G. B. Wilkins, said that such a record was hard to beat, and no Board could have had a more faithful or loyal servant. Dr. Orr is a valued member of the Dunmurry Congregation, and a member of the Committee of the Ulster Unitarian Association.

Much regret is felt in Holywood and indeed all over the North of Ireland at the removal of Mr. John Vyncomb, M.R.I.A., who has gone to live in London. For many years Mr. Vyncomb has been well known in artistic and literary circles, and his skill and taste as an illuminator would be hard to equal, specimens of his beautiful work being scattered all over the world. He lived in Holywood for many years and was a staunch supporter of the Unitarian Church there, being an active member of Committee and always ready to help the work of the Church. All good wishes go with him and his family to their new home.

UNITARIANISM OR LIBERAL RELIGION ?

By S. SHANNON MILLIN, *Barrister-at-Law.*

LIBERALISM is always attended with a danger that is absent in Conservatism, whether in the political or religious worlds. An unqualified belief in the divine right of kings, or in the apostolic succession, holds men in servile obedience and subjection, and fertile minds are cramped with the legacy of a by-gone age. But once the liberal forces come into operation the bond of adhesion is released, and there is a tendency for individuals to fly off, in a meteor-like fashion, uninfluenced by the attractive force of the central body. Some of these meteors have an ephemeral individual existence, and after making a splutter of more or less brilliance, exhaust themselves in the realms of space, and

" . . . Like a baseless fabric
 . . . Leave not a rack behind."

The Unitarian body, by its perfect freedom and complete liberality, has

not the restraining influence of those dogmatic churches of Christendom, the membership of which involves an implicit belief in a prescribed formula, and consequently it suffers more from disaffection within its ranks. An open attack upon a good cause is always more easy to repulse than the revolt of a few, who, while professing to be friendly, are, by their very attitude, weakening the underlying principles. This fact should not be lost sight of, at the present moment, because Unitarianism is passing through a crisis, on account of a few who desire to supplant the name with that of "Liberal Religion."

"Liberal Religion!" "New Theology!" Would to God, in the interests of religion, we could get away from the use of adjectives. But so long as we have clergymen of ambition (and I use the term in no disparaging sense) so long, I suppose, must we be subjected to a deluge of adjectives. Yet in spite of the deluge I have every confidence that the Unitarian ark will safely find its Ararat.

Whatever may be the outcome of this revolt in England the recent meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in Belfast have shown that the Unitarian faith has not lost its hold in the North of Ireland. As Non-Subscribing Presbyterians we are not ashamed to profess Unitarian beliefs, and to adopt the name, irrespective of its unpopularity, as the best description of Christ's teaching. While I am strongly of opinion that the cause of religion would be very materially advanced by submerging all distinctive titles into that of Christian, still to drop the name of Unitarian at the present time would be as fatal a policy as for England to disband its army and navy when the other European countries are bristling with arms.

Rev. Dr. Mellone, in his most interesting paper read in Belfast, on "The Liberal Awakening in Religion, and the Opportunities of a Liberal Faith," made use of a simile of a dog's tail, and its relation to the body. To quote his own words:—"But there is no need to wag

the tail too much." "It is not the most important part of the dog." "It is not even always an accurate indication of his sentiments." "I am much more interested in his heart than his tail." In the above words there is much matter for reflection on the part of the "tail" of the Unitarian body, and it is earnestly to be hoped that those few dissentients, to whom I have already referred, will carefully consider Dr. Mellone's words, as applied to a different use of the simile. If the British and Foreign Unitarian Association represents the "heart and head" of the imaginary dog, then the wagging of the "tail" does not denote an "accurate indication of his sentiments."

This "wagging of the tail" may be seen in various directions. Not content with the largely adopted collection of hymns, the "New Hymnal" was published, and, without going into the merits or demerits of the collection, it does seem strange that the Unitarian Longfellow should be omitted, while there are included many *amended* hymns by well-known Trinitarian writers. Again, the *Inquirer* has changed its descriptive title twice within four months—First, "A Journal of Religious Thought and Life;" second, "A Journal of Religious Life and Thought;" third, "A Journal of Liberal Religion, Literature and Social Progress."

As an Irish layman, I am quite content to let our English brethren look after their own interests. But there is a duty that confronts the Irish Unitarians of to-day—a duty that we owe to the memory of men like Henry Montgomery, William Hamilton Drummond, John Scott Porter, and Samuel Craig Nelson; a duty that we owe to ourselves as the trustees of a noble faith that has been bequeathed to humanity; a duty that we owe to God—and that is to keep the old flag flying; to stand by the grand old Unitarian flag that has weathered the storms of ridicule and abuse, and that remains to-day, untarnished by the putrid excrescence of a corrupt Church in a bygone age, the symbol of Christ's message to the world—*Love to God and Love to Man*.

MARTIN LUTHER AND HIS MUSIC REFORM.

BY ARTHUR DAVIS, F.R.C.O.



MARTIN LUTHER, the great Protestant Reformer, is such a prominent figure in Ecclesiastical history, that his services to the Church in a musical capacity, are more or less overshadowed.

A skilful player on both flute and lute, and the possessor of a remarkably fine bass voice, he, though not a musician to whom the epithet "great" applied, was yet sufficiently endowed, to enable him to adequately cope, with what may be termed the dual reform.

Luther ever had the music of the Church very much at heart, and was keenly cognisant of its value as an accessory to Divine worship. Though he fully recognised the necessity of a well-trained choir, he was always a strong advocate for congregational singing; and, even if not the actual founder, at least, established it on a firm basis.

In 1522, immediately after his departure from Wartburg, he commenced his great reform of the Church Service. It was not, however, till Christmas-Day of the year 1524, that his deeply-fostered idea of a German Mass, expressed itself in the form of a popular service in the Parish Church of Wittenberg, where he officiated. In this Mass, were incorporated hymns or psalms in the vernacular. The order of the service was published in the following year.

During this period, Luther's zeal in the cause of religious music was unbounded; indeed, so earnest was he in his endeavours, that he sought the help of Conrad Zupf, Kapellmeister to the Elector of Saxony, and Johann Walther, Cantor of Frederick the Wise, at Torgan. He furnished his adherents with German translations of Latin hymns, moulded into metrical verse, and composed or arranged tunes to them, either from the old plain-song melodies of his erstwhile mother Church, or from the popular airs of the day, both sacred and secular. The Psalms of David pro-

vided him with further material for his translations, as also the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and other portions of the Church Service.

These hymns, with their accompanying tunes or "Chorales," immediately grew exceedingly popular, and from that time onwards became deeply enshrined in the hearts of the people; so much so, that to-day the Chorale seems part and parcel of the German nation. In style, this precursor of our modern hymn tune was severely simple, yet solemn, and dignified; eminently fitted for an honoured place in Divine Service.

The year 1524 was an epoch-making one in the history of Church music: the publication of the first Protestant Hymn-book, by Walther, with Luther as collaborator, was no less important an event, than the first performance of the German Mass. This collection of Chorales was designated the "Enchiridion," or "Sacred Song-Book"; some of the tunes being in five and six parts, with the melody in the tenor.

Publication now followed publication; but which were Luther's own compositions, or only adaptations, has ever had to remain a matter of conjecture. Undoubtedly some were of his authorship: the fine Chorale, "Ein feste Burg," has generally been accepted as his; and the fact that it was sung over his grave at the Schloss-Kirche, has more strongly confirmed the general credence. The "Old Hundredth," too, has been ascribed to Luther, as well as both words and tune traditionally known as "Luther's Hymn," which commences "Great God, what do I see and hear."

Walther, who was a guest of Luther's for a short period at Wittenberg, states that Luther was responsible for the musical settings of several Gospels, Epistles, and words of Consecration. It has also been averred that he wrote Motets; but we have no conclusive evidence of such. A treatise in praise of music emanated from his pen in 1538, besides a poem on the same subject, at a later date, entitled, "Frau Musika."

The result of Luther's labours in the domain of Church music cannot readily be over-estimated; its influence in Western Christendom being remarkable. His initiatory movement respecting the metrical translations of the Psalms, and various portions of the Church Service, with adaptations of tunes for the same, ere long extended to France and England; and the best scholars and composers of these countries, were soon putting forth fine efforts in that direction. The Psalters of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, shew especially distinct traces of this influence; in fact, the same may be said of all Church hymn-books, worthy of the name, either new or old.

Of the Chorale itself, its effect on musical composition has been little short of marvellous. Bach made extensive use of it in his Passions, Church Cantatas, the Christmas Oratorio, and his magnificent Choral-preludes for the Organ. Mendelssohn, Mozart, Meyerbeer, and Wagner have also embodied these soul-stirring productions in some of their greatest works. The celebrated "Ein' feste Burg," has notably been used by Bach in a Church Cantata; Mendelssohn in his "Reformation Symphony"; Meyerbeer in his opera, "Les Huguenots"; and Wagner in the "Kaiser March."

Those who are interested in this class of composition, cannot do better than obtain the book of "Choralgesänge" by J. S. Bach, published by Breitkopf and Härtel. In this volume they will find 371 noble chorales; clothed in their true dignity; enriched by the master hand of the greatest contrapuntist the world has ever known.

If you wish to be miserable, think about yourself, about what you want, what you like, what respect people ought to pay you; and then to you nothing will be pure. You will spoil everything you touch, you will make misery for yourself out of everything which God sends you; you will be as wretched as you choose.—

Charles Kingsley.

NOTES OF THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN MEETING-HOUSE, DOWNPATRICK

BY REV. M. S. DUNBAR, M.A.



ENTRANCE GATES TO MEETING-HOUSE.

The following is the list of Ministers of the First Presbyterian Church, Downpatrick, so far as can be ascertained:—

Mr. Sinclair	...	...
John Fleming (<i>ejected</i>)	...	—1661
Archibald Young (<i>retired</i>)	...	—1689
John Hutcheson	...	1691—1697
Thomas Jackson	...	1697—1708
Thomas Nevin	...	1710—1744
William Nevin (<i>son of former</i>)	...	1746—1780
William Nevin (<i>son of former</i>)	...	1785—1789
James Nelson	...	1792—1838
Samuel Craig Nelson	...	1835—1891
<i>(son of former)</i>		
David Gordon	...	1871—1893
Michael S. Dunbar	...	1894—

THE Meeting-house of the First Presbyterian Congregation in Downpatrick stands on sloping ground, to the south of the town, embosomed in trees and surrounded by the graves of many generations.

The approach from the road is short and steep, through a gateway with pillars surmounted by ornamental urns. It is this view which is here given. The Church was built in 1710, at the beginning of the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Nevin, M.A. The former place of worship was situated about a mile out of town, at a place called the Flying Horse, on the road to Killough, no doubt in order to meet the convenience of the members, many of whom lived in the district of Ballee. The number must have been considerable, for it was found necessary to form a separate congregation before the removal into Downpatrick was made.

Of the ministers who served the Congregation previous to this event, I may mention the last two, for the sake of keeping in memory some interesting facts. During the short ministry of John Hutcheson (1691—1697) his second son, Francis, was born, who became Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and who is said to have been "the most eloquent and influential professor in the Scottish Universities in the first half of the Eighteenth Century."

His successor, Mr. Thomas Jackson, had this eulogy pronounced on him by Mr. Nevin, who came after him:—"It was your happiness and mine too that your former excellent pastor, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, was of that temper as to promote pure, peaceable, and practical religion, without bitterness or rage against any, and to instil into you the spirit of Christianity, not that of a party."

With Mr. Nevin's ministry our history as Non-Subscribing Presbyterians begins. He was a zealous advocate of the principle; and the esteem in which he was held, and the confidence that was placed in him by the other members of the party, were shown by his being chosen in 1723 to proceed to London and confer with the English Non-Subscribers on the prospects of the party in Ulster.

Into that controversy we cannot here enter. Suffice it to say, that in 1724 he was libelled by the General Synod for using certain expressions in private conversation, which, it was supposed, implied that he held Arian views of the person of Christ. Without coming to a definite decision on this question, the Synod carried a resolution that he should be called upon to make a declaration of his belief. This he refused to do from conscientious motives, and consequently he was excluded from Church fellowship. Two years afterwards the Synod proceeded to exclude the Presbytery of Antrim, into which they had previously put all the Non-Subscribers, and thus the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church was launched on its separate and independent course.

His son, Mr. William Nevin, succeeded to the pastorate in 1746, and held it almost exactly the same length of time as his father, dying in 1780. We have not been able to find any account of his character or work, but the fact that the Congregation dispensed with a pastor for the long period of five years in order to obtain the services of his son and namesake, may be taken as speaking well for him. At his death the younger of his two sons was a medical student at Glasgow, but at the request of the Congregation he began to prepare for the ministry, and after being licensed, was chosen to fill his father's place. The ministry of Mr. Wm. Nevin, jun., was, however, short. After four years he resigned his charge and settled in the town as a doctor. It was his daughter who was married to Mr. Hugh Wallace, whose grandson is the present Colonel Wallace.

(To be concluded.)

ORDINATION AT NEWRY.



REV. GEO. J. SLIPPER.

ON Tuesday, 5th October, the Rev. George J. Slipper, formerly of Moneyrea, was ordained to the pastorate of the Unitarian Church, Newry, which has been vacant almost two years. The service commenced at 12 o'clock noon, and was well attended by the members of the congregation. After devotional exercises, the Rev. Edgar Lockett, Banbridge, Moderator of the Armagh Presbytery, preached an appropriate sermon. The Presbyterian form of Church government was expounded by the Rev. W. E. Mellone, Warrenpoint. The Rev. J. A. Kelly, Clerk of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, put the prescribed questions to the Rev. Mr. Slipper and the congregation, after which the ordination took place, the Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A., of Downpatrick, leading in prayer. The Rev. H. J. Rossington, Belfast, gave the charge to the minister, and the Rev. Alfred Davison, Dromore, the charge to the congregation, and the service was brought to a close by the Lord's Prayer and the Benediction.

Statement by Rev. G. J. Slipper.

In responding to the invitation extended to me, that I shall give a brief statement of the principles and aims guiding me in the acceptance of the call to the charge of this Congregation, I would like, first of all, to express how deeply conscious I am of the great and solemn obligation laid upon me in the true fulfilment of the office of a minister of God and a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is no mean standard by which a minister of the Gospel must measure the responsibility resting upon him—to teach, to guide, to exhort, and to interpret the sacred and blessed truths of religion in their application to life and conduct. Thus, counting it a privilege, even as also I embrace it as a duty, I trust that, with God's help and abundant grace, I shall ever estimate at its true value, the responsibility that is attached to the charge to which I have been called, and which is now ratified by this solemn service. I ain would I seek to "magnify my office" as a minister of God, and as a true servant of His well beloved Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. With His word in my heart, feeling ever the inspiration of His message of love and redemption, and actuated by the example of His great and perfect life, I look forward with confidence and hope, tempered by the sense of a sincere humility, to the work which lieth before me as the pastor and friend of every member of this Church.

In the freedom which our ministry enjoys, I am not called upon to pledge myself to any set formulæ or creeds. It is granted to me to think and to speak the message of God's love and grace in accordance with the dictates of my conscience and my reverent search after truth, concerning the sacred and eternal verities. Nevertheless, I would assure you that it shall always be my most earnest desire and endeavour to abstain from dogmatic assumption on my own part in proclaiming from this pulpit the words of eternal life. My interpretation of God's Word and Christ's Gospel shall ever be fashioned and tempered by a sweet reasonableness, and a deep reverence for the thoughts of others, whose interpretation may differ, in form, from my own.

It will ever be my joy to expound the Word that "still hath ancient power" in the spirit and sense of modern thought.

You do not require from me any lengthy statement of belief; let it suffice, therefore, for me to say that I earnestly and solemnly believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain the Word of God, and reveal to us the rule of faith and conduct for all God's children. I believe in the word and work of Jesus Christ our Exemplar, who is ever the Way, the Truth, the Life, for all mankind. In His word I find a power unto salvation, for all who will follow its dictates and interpret its meanings in life and conduct. And with this belief so strong within me, it



NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWRY.

shall ever be my sincere purpose and resolve to draw from the message of that Word those deep and sacred meanings which shall serve to inspire and actuate our hearts unto all goodness and righteousness and truth.

As a minister of that glorious Gospel, I trust I may ever be found bearing witness in my own life and conduct, to its power and to its beautiful influences over the souls of men.

There is much to be done to lead on the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth—to this work, therefore, would I fain point the way and encourage the young to take up their part. In all this aim, I ask simply for the prayers and loyalty of you, whom now I am privileged to call my people and my friends.

I stand in the succession of a band of God's good men, whose noble ministries have influenced our Churches with lasting good, and my earnest prayer and desire is that God will help us as minister and people to uphold the true and noble traditions of our Church here, making it more and more a rising influence for righteousness and truth, as we follow in the footsteps of Christ and unitedly work together with God for the spread of His kingdom and the quickening of His Spirit in the hearts of men.

Subsequently the new minister and the visiting ministers and friends were entertained to dinner by the congregation in the Victoria Hotel. Mr. Albert Scott, one of the elders of the Church, presided, and on his right sat the Rev. George J. Slipper.

After dinner, Mr. Christopher Warnock, in the unavoidable absence, through bereavement, of the Congregational

Secretary, Mr. R. J. M'Combe, read a number of letters of apology for non-attendance.

The usual loyal and other toasts having been duly honoured,

Mr. Walter Scott had pleasure in proposing the sentiment of "The Visiting Brethren," and in doing so he said that he expressed not only his own views but those of every member of the Newry Congregation. They offered their best thanks and felt very grateful to the clergymen who so kindly conducted the services for them from Sunday to Sunday during the period of almost two years that the pulpit remained vacant. Many of them came long distances to be with them. Particularly would he refer to the kindness of Mr. Mellone, of Warrenpoint, who often, when in indifferent health, and when other supplies were not to be obtained, would drive up from Warrenpoint on cold and wintry mornings in order that a single Sunday service should not be missed.

The Rev. Herbert J. Rossington, Belfast, in response, said that they were all very glad to be there that day to do anything they could to help Mr. Slipper and the congregation of which he had now become minister.

The Rev. J. A. Kelly, Dunmurry, also responded.

The Rev. Mr. Slipper then proposed "The Health of the Chairman," which was appreciatively honoured, and Mr. Albert Scott having replied,

The proceedings then terminated.

A Congregational Soiree was held in the Schoolroom, Needham Place, in the evening, to welcome Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Slipper. There was a large attendance of the members of the congregation. Mr. Albert Scott presided. Addresses having been delivered by several ministers, a programme of music was gone through, Miss Thompson presiding at the piano.

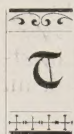
Block kindly lent by "Newry Reporter."

Manners are the happy ways of doing things. If they are superficial, so are the dewdrops, which give such a depth to the morning meadows.—Emerson.

For the Children.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS.

BY MISS ETHEL DAVIDSON.



OMMY had been kept in the house all day, for he had a bad cold in his head. Neither mince pies nor the plum-pudding had had much taste. For the first time in his life of seven years he began to wish, like a grown-up person, that "Christmas was over." He felt so hot, and his hands and feet were like lumps of lead. He would really have been delighted to tumble into bed and lay his little aching head on his cool pillow, but pride forbade. Not for any immediate comfort would he give up the promised treat that on this, his seventh Christmas-Day, he might sit up till half-past ten and play snap-dragon with the others.

"Why Snap Dragon?" he said to himself, as he nodded beside the fire; "Snap Dragon—snap—"

And then suddenly the fire looked just like a Dragon—a great friendly dragon that seemed to smile fire at him from its eyes and mouth.

"Are you Snap Dragon?" gasped Tommy.

"Come for a ride on my back," said Snap Dragon, "away through Dream-land, where sometimes Truth lies hidden."

Then Snap Dragon slipped out of the grate, where he had been curled up, and crouched before Tommy. "Hold tight," he said, as Tommy scrambled on his back. Then unfurling a pair of wings coloured like soap-bubbles he soared away with Tommy into Dream-land.

"Where are you going?" said Tommy.

"Through the ages," said the Dragon, "to look for the Truth about Christmas."

Then they alighted in an orchard among grey gnarled apple trees bare of leaves and fruit. There stood a jolly

looking farmer in greatcoat and muffler. All round him danced girls and men who seemed to be pouring cider out of great jugs over the fruit-trees. They were all laughing and singing a song about apples and pears.

"We are in Devon. They are keeping up an old custom which is supposed to make their trees yield much fruit. But it is not the Truth about Christmas," said the dragon, as it rose again into the air.

"Oh!" said Tommy presently, "who's that?" pointing to a big man with a flaxen beard.

"Knecht Rupert," said Snap Dragon. "We are in Germany. He is Father Christmas' servant. You see he carries a great bag full of toys in one hand for good children, and in the other a basket quite full of birch rods for the naughty ones."

"Shall we go on?" said Tommy, hurriedly.

"I am sure that's a thrush!" he cried presently. "What has he to do with Christmas?"

"He plants the mistletoe in the bark of the trees with his beak, and you always have mistletoe at Christmas. I don't know why," said the dragon.

"To kiss girls under," said Tommy, with scorn.

"I can tell you a story about it," said the dragon. "A myth, which means something that did not really happen—"

"Like you," said Tommy.

"Take care!" said Snap Dragon, lurching uncomfortably; and Tommy gripped tightly to its scaly sides.

"There was once a woman called Friga who had a son called Balder, of whom she was very fond," said the dragon in a story-telling voice. "Because she wanted him to live for ever she cast a spell over everything so that it could not kill him; but she forgot the mistletoe. She happened to mention this to Loake, who hated Balder. 'But it does not matter,' she said, 'for the mistletoe could not hurt him.' Then Loake smiled, and cut a bit of mistletoe into an arrow, and gave it to blind Heda to shoot with when Balder

stood in the way and the arrow struck Balder, and he died. That was before there had been a Christmas," added Snap Dragon.

"What is that great log there, blazing away with all the people sitting round it?" asked Tommy.

"That is a yule log," answered Snap Dragon. "The people sitting round it are old Saxons. They think that all their wrongs and evil deeds will burn away in those flames. That is just a foreshadowing of Christmas."

After a while, Snap Dragon stopped, and slid from under Tommy.

"This is the first Christmas," it said; "and this is Truth. So I must leave you."

Tommy stood by himself and looked at a little baby lying on straw in a stable. Just a little baby like what he had been, and his tiny sister was. "The Love of God had always been with us, but this little child, when he grew to be a man, made us understand it better. He showed us how we must love others and help others," said a soft voice like Mother's; "how we cannot do evil without hurting other people. He showed us how we were all one family with Him and with God. He gave us an example that we can follow all our lives. So we keep his birthday—Christmas—the Birthday of Christ. All our little gifts and merriments are to show our love to each other and the love of God to us—and how happy and glad we are that Christ was born to show us how to be good."

Afterwards, Tommy thought perhaps he had been asleep and it *was* his mother's voice—but on his 70th Christmas Day, he had not forgotten.

He that cannot live happily anywhere will live happily nowhere.—*Seneca*.

'Tis a Dutch proverb that "Paint costs nothing," such are its preserving qualities in damp climates. Well, sunshines costs less, yet is finer pigment. And so of cheerfulness, or a good temper: the more it is spent, the more of it remains.—*Emerson*.

REPORTS.

Ballee: The Late Mr. John Kelly.—We regret to announce the death of Mr John Kelly, which took place at his residence, Ballyalton, Downpatrick, on Friday afternoon, 5th November, in his 82nd year. Well known as a successful agriculturalist, he carried off several valuable cups and other prizes offered by the Lecale Farming Society for up-to-date farming. He leaves behind to mourn his loss a widow, five sons, two daughters, and twenty-one grandchildren. His funeral, which was very numerous attended, took place on Monday, 8th November, to the family burying-ground at Ballee Meeting-house, the officiating ministers being Revs. J. H. Bibby (*pastor loci*), W. Napier, M. S. Dunbar and J. Joseph Magill. In the death of Mr. Kelly, Ballee Congregation has lost a life-long member and a warm friend. Mr. Kelly was the father of the Rev. J. A. Kelly, minister of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Dunmurry, with whom, as with the other members of the family, much sympathy will be felt.

Downpatrick.—We notice that the Book of the Downpatrick Bazaar is now on sale at the Belfast, Holywood, Comber, and Newtownards bookstalls, at the price of 3d. each, or from Jos. Newman, Downpatrick, per post, 4d. each. The book contains portraits of past and present ministers, historical sketch of Church, and poems by the late Rev. David Gordon. We trust that the book may have a good sale, and that the Bazaar may be enthusiastically supported by all our readers.

Holywood.—On Tuesday, November 9th, the Annual Soiree in connection with the Holywood Total Abstinence Society was held in the Schoolroom of the First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Church. Tea was at 7-30, when the following ladies kindly acted as tea-makers—Mrs. Robert Grainger, Mrs. Harvey, Miss M'Alister, Miss Munster, Miss Pink, Miss Latimer, Miss J. Murphy, Miss M'Cammon, Miss M. Neill, the Misses Douglas, Miss M. Grainger, Miss L. Greenfield, Miss J. Wright, Miss E. Cron and Miss V. Shannon. The chair was taken at 8-15 by the Rev. G. L. Phelps, in the unavoidable absence of Mr. Richard Patterson, J.P. Owing to there being several other meetings in the town the same evening the attendance was not so large as usual, but those who were there spent a most enjoyable evening. A very interesting and instructive address was given by the Rev. Joseph Worthington, B.A., of Mountpottinger, and enjoyable musical items were given by the following:—Miss Kathleen Neill (pianoforte solos), Miss M'Cammon (songs), Mr. S. M'Crum (songs). There was also a part song by the Choir, and two vocal duets by Mrs. M'Crum, Miss Murphy, Mr. Harvey and Mr. J. Shannon, jun.; also there were humorous recitations by Mr. T. Wotherpoon which were greatly appreciated. This is the 68th year that the Holywood Total

Abstinence Society has held meetings, and it is hoped that the meetings that will be held monthly during the winter will be well attended.

On Thursday, December 16th, the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church at Holywood is having a Grand Cake Fair and Fancy Sale in the Town Hall. The Sale will be opened at three o'clock by Mrs. James Campbell, a prominent member of All Souls' Church, Belfast. There will be well-filled stalls of cakes, seasonable provisions, Christmas gifts, etc., etc., and it is hoped that there will be a good attendance of friends from the different churches of our denomination. It is four years since Holywood had a Sale, and if this one is as well supported as the last it is sure to be a success. Contributions of goods or money will be most gratefully received by Mrs. S. D. Neill, Ardmoyle, Cultra, or by Miss L. M. Patterson, Hon. Secretary, Kilmore, Holywood.

Killinchy: The late Mr. David Watson.—With deep regret we record the passing away into the higher life of Mr. David Watson, Ballymecashon, Killinchy. Mr. Watson had been ailing more or less for the past twelve or fifteen months. He had attended Church on Sunday, September 26th, and was on his way home, when he was seized with a fit of giddiness at the Manse door. This seizure proved to be his last illness. He was in bed for a week when, on Saturday, October 2nd, he breathed his last in the 61st year of his age. Mr. Watson was a member of a family illustrious in the annals of our congregations in Co. Down. No less than three of his great-uncles were leading ministers of the denomination, namely, the Revs. Samuel Watson, Killinchy; David Watson, Clough; and John Watson, Greyabbey. Thus by family connection he was naturally an adherent of our Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches. Mr. Watson was a life-long member of the Remonstrant Church, Killinchy. He had been Secretary of the Church for many years, and continued to hold that office at the time of his death. His fellow-members valued him for his shrewd wisdom and his counsel was always listened to with respect. He was a cautious, kindly man, easily entreated, anxious at all times for the welfare of the Congregation. As a hard-working farmer, his interests were largely confined to the welfare of his family and his Church. In these two spheres he was an active worker to the last; and it may be said of him that he died in harness, both as regards his daily work and the Church. It is gratifying thus to record of him that his interest in the Church was as keen on the day his last illness seized him as ever it was. Mr. Watson leaves behind him a widow, one son, four daughters, and a sister to mourn his loss. Too often we have to deplore the fact that active members die off without leaving representatives interested in the Church of their fathers. In this case it is not so. Mr. Watson brought up his

children to be as enthusiastic as himself and to be well versed in the traditions of their fathers. He will be greatly missed by his family, and our deep sympathy goes out to the widow, the children and the sister in their great bereavement.

Moira.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held here on 14th November. The frost had nipped the flowers which had been waiting for us, but we had a plentiful supply of grain, fruits and vegetables, together with the beautiful tints of autumn leaves in manifold variety. Also we received the evidence of a full Meeting-house of admiring friends, that the taste displayed by our young people was most excellent, and their energy very much to be commended. The Misses Patterson and M'Caw, Messrs. W. J. Agnew and James Wilson, with the two younger sons of the Treasurer, excelled themselves in their willing usefulness. The service in the evening was conducted by the Rev. J. A. Kelly (Dunmurry), who gave an eloquent discourse to the large congregation, in which were included many friends of other denominations. Miss Cooksey (Belfast) rendered two solos, "Lead, Kindly Light" and "O Rest in the Lord" most feelingly. A number of friends came out from Belfast, and the Rev. S. Evans Bowen, with Mr. Samuel Christie, cycled over from Crumlin and effectually strengthened our Choir.

Mountpottinger.—An enlarged framed Photograph of the late Mrs. Davies has been hung in the Mountpottinger Schoolroom, and in connection therewith a simple but impressive ceremony was held at the close of Morning Service a week or two ago. To show their respect for Mrs. Davies the members of the Congregation, at the minister's request, assembled in the Schoolroom, and after a few introductory remarks by Mr. Worthington, Miss Maria Davidson, in the course of an interesting address, said that it was most fitting that the portrait of Mrs. Davies should be hung in the Schoolroom which had been generously built in her memory by her uncle and aunt, Sir Edwin and Lady Durning-Lawrence. But apart from that there was in all their hearts a deep and reverent regard for Mrs. Davies, for her unselfish disposition and her noble character. She counted it one of the privileges of her life to have known her, and it was a source of great gratification to them all to know that Mrs. Davies' brief residence of two years among them had been very happy. Other members of the Congregation added their tribute to Mrs. Davies, and the proceedings terminated by Mr. Worthington proposing on his own behalf and on behalf of the members of the Congregation, a vote of thanks to Mrs. H. L. Orr, who had initiated the idea of the portrait, and had brought it to such a successful issue.

Newry.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on Sunday, October 24th, and continued on Monday evening, October 25th. The Church was prettily decorated by a band

of willing helpers, and Miss L. M'Combe presided at the organ. The Rev. Geo. J. Slipper conducted all the services and preached appropriate sermons which were greatly enjoyed by the large congregations present, which included several friends from the other churches in the town.

Unity Guild.—The inaugural meeting of the present session was held in the Central Hall on October 27th, when a fair number of members assembled. Rev. J. A. Kelly gave a short presidential address, and the Hon. Secretary outlined the syllabus arranged, which would, he suggested, be found of a pleasing character. The meeting was favoured with the presence of Revs. W. Copeland Bowie and Henry Rawlings, who gave interesting accounts of how the young people in their particular districts of London carried on meetings of a character similar to those of the Guild.

The November meeting of the Guild was held on Wednesday, 17th, in Mountpottinger Schoolroom, when a very fair attendance was observed in spite of counter attractions. "Holiday Papers by Members" was what the syllabus announced—a new departure which proved a complete success and one worthy of repetition at some future date. The members who undertook to interest the gathering were Misses Patterson and Kennedy, Messrs. Walter Drummond and E. R. Jackson. The first-named showed some very good slides relating to St. Ives (Hunts.) and Oxford, explaining same in a very clear manner; whilst Mr. Drummond, who followed, read a most interesting account of his voyage to London on a trial trip and his impressions of the Metropolis and surrounding country. Miss Kennedy contributed a neat little paper on holiday experiences in the neighbourhood of Larne, and from the description of surrounding districts evidently impressed her hearers with the fact that they need not travel too far to spend an enjoyable holiday. Mr. Jackson wound up the evening's programme by his description of a visit home at the time of the third Test Match, the slides relating to which were evidently appreciated by the enthusiasts among the audience. Next meeting in Rosemary Hall, on December 15th, when Mr. A. M'L. Cleland will deliver a Lantern Lecture entitled "How the A B C Grew."

Half the world is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting, and in being served by others. It consists in giving and in serving others.

Printed by J. W. Boyd, 2, Union Street (first door from Donegall Street), Belfast. May also be had from Miss M'Caw, the Depository, Rosemary Street, Belfast; and from Rev. A. Turner, Templepatrick, to whom all communications respecting the Magazine should be addressed. Business Agent:—Rev. George J. Slipper, The Manse, Newry, Co. Down.

Ulster Unitarian Christian Association,

35, Rosemary Street, Belfast.

Business Hours—10 till 5.

Hon. Secretary—Rev. J. A. KELLY.

Saturdays—10 till 2.

Assist. Secretary—Rev. G. J. SLIPPER.

The Depository is open daily for the sale of Unitarian Literature, including the publications of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Sunday School Association, Manchester District Sunday School Association, and American Unitarian Association. Tracts and Pamphlets expository of Unitarian Principles may be had free on application, or will be sent by post to enquirers if stamped envelope is enclosed with application.

A large assortment of Bibles and Hymn Books always in stock ; also a large selection of Books by popular authors, suitable for Home Reading and School Prizes.

Books at Lowest Discount Prices for Cash.

Any Book not in stock will be procured on shortest notice.

N.B.—To enable the Committee to carry on its important work, new and increased Subscriptions are earnestly solicited, and should be sent to **Mr. C. J. M'KISACK, Hon. Treasurer, 35, ROSEMARY ST., BELFAST.**

Books of Liberal Religion, People's Editions, 6d. each net. By Post, 8d.

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles for English Readers. A Translation with Introduction and Notes by James Edwin Odgers, M.A., D.D.

The Bible : What it is and is not. By Joseph Wood.

Endeavours after the Christian Life. First and Second Series. Two Volumes. By James Martineau, LL.D., D.C.L., D.D.

The Perfect Life : Twelve Discourses. By William Ellery Channing, D.D.

God and the Soul : Fundamental Religion. By Richard A. Armstrong, B.A.

The Passing and the Permanent in Religion. By Minot J. Savage, D.D.

The First Three Gospels : Their Origin and Relations. With a new Chapter on the Historical Value of the Gospels. By J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., D.D., D.Litt.

The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in its Relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge. By Charles Beard, B.A., LL.D.

The Soul : Its Sorrows and its Aspirations. By Francis William Newman. With Memoir and Introduction by Charles B. Upton, B.A., B.Sc.

Materialism and Atheism Examined. By James Freeman Clarke, D.D. With an Introduction by Sydney H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.

The Religious Ideas. By the late William Johnson Fox, M.P. With a brief Sketch of his Life.

Book Room, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.